



RESOLUTION

**URGING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO END ITS
UNIVERSAL INDOOR MASK MANDATE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, in response to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, Governor David Ige ("Governor") issued a proclamation declaring the existence of a state of emergency in the State of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and then-Mayor Caldwell subsequently issued additional emergency proclamations and orders in an attempt to control the spread of the virus and implemented measures such as stay-at-home orders, 14-day travel-related quarantines, social distancing and facemask requirements, and vaccination mandates; and

WHEREAS, after more than two years of living under pandemic related mandates and restrictions, the people of Hawai'i have returned to a degree of normalcy, and the majority of pandemic related safety requirements have been discontinued or allowed to expire; and

WHEREAS, although Hawai'i's indoor mask requirement ended on March 25, 2022, and a federal judge struck down the federal mask mandate for airplanes and public transportation on April 18, 2022, indoor mask wearing continues to be required in Hawai'i's public schools; and

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2022, the then-Interim Superintendent of the Hawai'i State Department of Education ("DOE") announced through a letter addressed to parents and guardians of DOE students that the DOE will continue to implement universal indoor mask wearing in schools through May 27, 2022, the last day of school for DOE teachers, despite objections from many parents; and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 2022, the then-Interim Superintendent of the DOE announced at a news conference that the universal indoor mask usage rule for Hawai'i's regular public schools will continue through at least the summer term; and

WHEREAS, many parents have expressed concerns that: proper mask wearing is difficult for young children and children with special needs, mask wearing may impair children's respiratory function, and child sized medical grade masks are difficult and expensive to obtain; and



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
HONOLULU, HAWAII

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WHEREAS, in addition, the short-term and long-term mental and social consequences of mask wearing on children have not been adequately studied, and there are concerns that masking may interfere with childhood development in areas such as nonverbal communication and emotional bonding; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes that mask wearing at public schools should be a personal decision to be made by the affected parents and students rather than a blanket mandate for all children at public schools; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the Hawai'i State Department of Education is urged to end its universal indoor mask mandate for public schools; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Interim Superintendent of the Department of Education, and the Chairperson of the Board of Education.

INTRODUCED BY:

Hidi Tsunayoshi

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JUL 8 2022
Honolulu, Hawaii

Councilmembers